



THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TEFAP)

Mission of TEFAP

Our mission is to equitably distribute those food commodities made available to the State of Washington to qualified low-income clients. In addition, provide service agencies throughout the state with the necessary framework to keep food assistance distributions flexible and responsive to client needs.

Fast Facts

Currently, TEFAP programs serve over 100,000 households representing 300,000 people each month.

In 2009, the program saw an increase of 19% in the number of families served with a similar increase expected in 2010.

Comments from around the state:

The importance of TEFAP to help supplement needy households with food should not be taken lightly. Many families with children, the elderly, the working poor and those that have recently lost jobs all depend on food banks to help them through difficult times.

– CAC Lewis, Mason & Thurston Counties, Olympia

TEFAP is essential food that sustains families in our community; it makes up 57% of the food given to food banks in our area.

– Rural Resources Community Action, Colville

Funding for TEFAP

Federal Funds: Federal Fiscal Year 2010: \$1,124,924 to pay for the administration of the program. In 2010 food banks received 7.2 million pounds of entitlement food and an additional 8.8 pounds of bonus commodities, both worth a total of \$11.9 million.

State Funds: State Fiscal Year 2010: \$393,000 and Federal Fiscal Year 2011 (est.): \$393,000. These funds cover the cost of transporting and storing food. The funding levels are the minimum requirements for the state to receive TEFAP funding.

ARRA Funding: In 2009, Washington received \$1.93 million in food and \$483,566 in administrative funds from the federal government's American Recovery & Reinvestment Act. In 2010, the state received \$493,653 to help with administrative costs. Assistance from ARRA will not continue through 2011.

Future Outlook: Since 2009, TEFAP has had increased food and funding through ARRA, a focused dairy purchase from USDA, and increased bonus food. As the focused dairy and ARRA funding will no longer be available, food levels may drop if bonus food doesn't continue to increase through 2011.

Program activities

Washington State Department of Agriculture manages The Emergency Food Assistance Program, receiving food and operational funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for distribution to 20 lead agencies. These agencies provide food to 450 food banks, shelters and meal providers in Washington. They serve hungry low-income children, adults, elderly and the homeless. TEFAP foods include meat, fish, vegetables, beef stew, applesauce, rice, whole grain pasta, fruits, shelf-stable milk, cereal, juices, baking mix, eggs and more. The emphasis in the last few years has been on healthy foods. Households currently receive 13.7 pounds of food per month. This will drop significantly with the elimination of the ARRA assistance and the decrease in commodities food.

Food Assistance Programs

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Who can receive TEFAP assistance?

Low-income families who earn 185% or less of the federal poverty level are eligible to receive TEFAP food. Families visiting food banks are asked to self-declare their income and are not asked to provide verification.

How does the state decide what agencies receive TEFAP food to distribute?

For more information on how your organization can distribute TEFAP food, contact your county's lead agency. You can find out who to contact by going to <http://agr.wa.gov/FoodProg/> and clicking on the link to the temporary TEFAP website. Here you can search for your lead agency by entering in the county your agency serves in.